

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are now pending in the application. Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given to the present application and the courtesies extended to applicant's representative during a telephone interview on April 18, 2005. During that interview, the Examiner indicated that the claims as amended herein would define patentable subject matter over the current rejection based solely on U.S. Patent No. 6,018,406 cited in the Office Action, but that these amendments may also necessitate further consideration. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

DRAWINGS

The drawings stand objected to for certain informalities. Applicant has attached formal drawings for the Examiner's approval. Figure 2 of the drawings has been revised to overcome the Examiner's objection. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 4, 9 13 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 9 has been amended to address this rejection. In addition, Claims 4, 13 and 17 have been cancelled from the present application, thereby rendering the

remainder of this objection moot. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 9-11, 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,018,406 (Ishimatsu). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify an aspect of the present invention. Applicant asserts that this does not change the scope of the claim for purposes of patentability and thus should not be considered a narrowing amendment. As noted above, the Examiner agrees that this claims, along with claims depending therefrom, defines patentable subject matter over the relied upon reference.

Applicant notes that independent Claims 9 and 14 recite similar subject matter, and thus should be allowable, along with claims depending therefrom, for the same reasons as Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION


It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office

Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 26, 2005

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached "Replacement Sheets" of drawings include changes to Figure 1. The attached "Replacement Sheets," which includes Figures 1 and 2, replaces the original sheets including Figures 1 and 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets